

19 December 2012

Local Government Acts Taskforce
Locked Bag 3015
NOWRA NSW 2541

Email: LGATSubmissions@dlg.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Local Government Acts Taskforce: Preliminary Ideas Paper

The Urban Taskforce represents Australia's most prominent property developers and equity financiers. We provide a forum for people involved in development and the planning of the urban environment to engage in constructive dialogue with government and the community.

The Urban Taskforce has engaged in the local government reform debate and we strongly support the review of the Act to facilitate urgently needed change to the structure and operation of local government. In this regard, the Urban Taskforce submits a recently completed study into improving local government efficiency. This research was assisted by Percy Allan and Associates and copies are enclosed for your consideration as part of this review. Additional copies may be downloaded from:

<http://www.urbantaskforce.com.au/liveability-crisis/>

You will note that our investigation has revealed that significant cost savings and efficiency gains can be achieved by:

- adopting a regional approach to governance;
- implementing independent planning assessment; and,
- forming local government shared services centres.

We recommend that the Act be amended to facilitate regional cooperation and the formation of shared services centres. For instance, to facilitate regional tendering, section 377 of the Act would need to be amended to enable a regional organisation, acting on behalf of a number of local councils to call for tenders. Currently the Act requires each council to individually adopt the tender. This is obviously an unwieldy process that would place additional time delays into a tender process.

Furthermore, the Act should be amended to refer explicitly to regional organisations/shared services centres and facilitate the delegation of council functions to such regional organisation. Additionally, these functions should be automatically recognised in other applicable legislation.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues with you in more detail. Should you have any further enquires in relation to this submission please feel free to contact me on telephone number 9238 3927.

Yours sincerely

Urban Taskforce Australia

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris Johnson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chris Johnson, AM
Chief Executive Officer